

## Who should succeed Lenin? – Job Interviews

Lenin died in January 1924. The decision was taken (against the wishes of his widow) to have his body embalmed and placed on display in Red Square.



At this point the struggle for power began in earnest.

### Task 1

- Start by completing the “One-Word Summary” for each statement (the first is done for you).
- Using any sources available to you<sup>1</sup>, write “S” for Strength, “W” for weakness, in the appropriate column for each row where T=Trotsky, K=Kamenev, Z=Zinoviev, S=Stalin, B=Bukharin.
- Your teacher will go through the answers as a class later.


	One-Word Summary	T	K	Z	S	B
He was War Commissar; Lenin said he “created a model army in a year”						
Lenin called him “too rude”						
The historian EH Carr said he had “neither the desire or capacity to lead men”						
Lenin described him as the “most capable man in the CC”						
Lenin called him (“the favourite of the whole party”).						
Spent exile with Lenin for 14 years, editing <i>Pravda</i> and <i>Iskra</i> .						
Young, dynamic, eager to learn, very intelligent (“major and valued theorist” – Lenin)						
His arrogance had alienated many people, e.g. during the Brest-Litovsk negotiations.						
Like Zinoviev, in the “October Episode” he had opposed Lenin’s call for Revolution						
He had working class credibility: Lenin called him “That wonderful Georgian”						
Underestimated the importance of “networking”. His nickname						

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Oxley 149-151, 136-139 Corrin

was "The Pen"						
His capacity for violence had been difficult for Lenin to control during the Civil War						
Editor of Pravda, the party newspaper						
Lenin said he was "too self assured" and "preoccupied with administration"						
Wrote "ABC of Communism" – a summary of communist ideas for ordinary people						
Known to have serious heart problems						
Moved from Left (World Revolution) to Right (pro-NEP) with ease.						
Lenin was alarmed about his handling of the "Georgian Affair"						
Very ill with malaria at the time of the power struggle						
As General Secretary he had great powers of promotion, demotion and relocation						
Trotsky described him as "A great propagandist... Good nature personified."						
He "never fully understood" Marxist dialectics (Lenin)						
Chairman of the Soviet of Moscow						
As a revolutionary he had robbed banks to support the Bolshevik party						
Chairman of the Soviet of Petrograd						
Only became a Politburo member in 1922						
He was a powerful orator and popular with the young members of the party						

**Task 2**

When your teacher has gone through the answers with you, use your corrected version to complete the table overleaf.

	STRENGTHS:	WEAKNESSES:
<b>Trotsky</b> 		
<b>Bukharin</b> 		
<b>Stalin</b> 		
<b>Kamenev</b> 		
<b>Zinoviev</b> 		

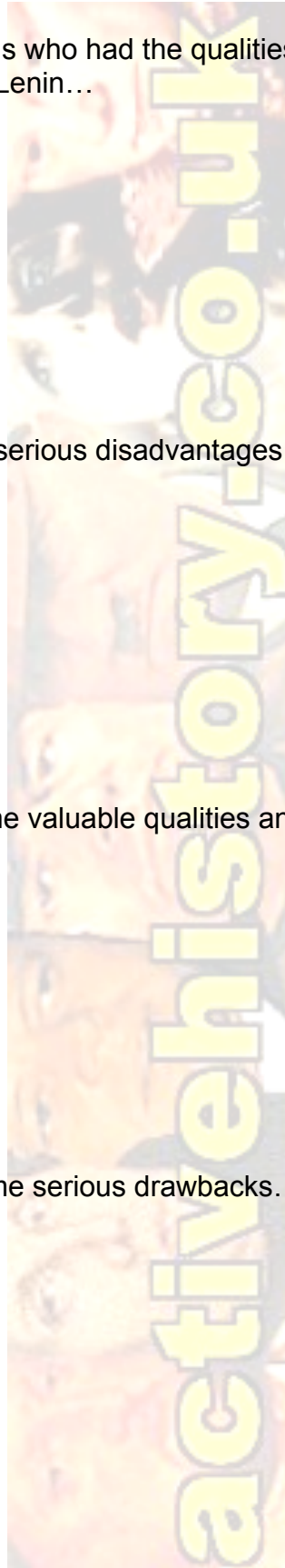
**Finally, complete these paragraphs:**

Stalin faced a number of rivals who had the qualities and experience which made them credible successors to Lenin...

In contrast, Stalin had some serious disadvantages....

Nevertheless, Stalin had some valuable qualities and experience himself...

In addition, his rivals had some serious drawbacks...



### Extension Activity: Stalin's Speech at Lenin's Funeral

Read through the following speech and discuss as a class:

- What is Stalin's attitude towards the dead leader?
- What clues does it provide about Stalin's objectives for the party?
- What persuasive writing techniques does it use?

Comrades, we Communists are people of a special cut...There is no loftier title than that of a member of the party, of which Comrade Lenin has been founder and leader. It is not given to everyone to be a member of such a party. It is not given to everyone to endure the hardships and storms that go with the membership of such a party. Sons of the working class, sons of misery and struggle, sons of incredible privation and heroic endeavour, these, above all, ought to be the members of such a party ....

In leaving us, Comrade Lenin ordained us to hold high and keep pure the great title of member of the party. We vow to thee, Comrade Lenin, that we shall honourably fulfil this thy commandment .

In leaving us, Comrade Lenin ordained us to guard the unity of our party like the apple of our eye. We vow to thee, Comrade Lenin, that we shall fulfil honourably this thy commandment, too ....

In leaving us, Comrade Lenin ordained us to guard and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat.....

In leaving us, Comrade Lenin ordained us to strengthen with all our might the alliance of workers and peasants. We vow to thee, Comrade Lenin, that we shall fulfil honourably this thy commandment, too ....

In leaving us, Comrade Lenin ordained us to keep faith with the principles of the Communist International. We vow to thee, Comrade Lenin, that we shall not spare our lives in the endeavour to strengthen and broaden the alliance of the workers of the whole world--the Communist International.